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SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS HELPS BREAK GROUND ON STATE-OF-THE-ART TRANSIT FACILITY AT EL MONTE STATION

The \$45 million makeover, the result of the passage of Senate Bill 1422, authored in 2008 by then Senator Ridley-Thomas, is part of the ExpressLanes Demonstration Project expected to create an estimated 2,400 jobs in the region

LOS ANGELES – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today joined Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) officials and other local elected officials to break ground on a state-of-the-art transit facility that will revamp and expand the current El Monte Station.

The ceremony in celebration of the \$45 million makeover was the result of the passage of Senate Bill 1422, authored in 2008 by then Senator Ridley-Thomas. The legislation enabled Los Angeles County to receive \$210 million in federal funds for the ExpressLanes Project, which includes portions of the I-110 Harbor and I-10 freeways.

The ExpressLanes Project is a one-year demonstration project, where existing carpool lanes on the I-10 El Monte Busway and I-110 Harbor Transitway will be converted to High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes called ExpressLanes. The project is scheduled to be implemented in 2012.

The projects are expected to create an estimated 2,400 jobs including 350 for the I-10 El Monte Busway and 500 for the I-110 Harbor Transitway.

“This project is right for Los Angeles County,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said during the ceremony. “It is properly targeted at two major transit hubs: the El Monte Station here in the San Gabriel Valley and the Artesia Transit Center, a major bus transfer point along the I-110 Harbor Freeway, one of L.A.’s most important arteries.”

The Supervisor, an MTA Board member and chair of the agency's Ad Hoc Congestion Pricing Committee, championed the project to reduce traffic on the I-110 and I-10 freeways, improve the air quality along the two corridors, create jobs and encourage economic development opportunities in the region.

"When we think about congestion pricing and other transit projects, we have to think broadly in terms of the cumulative benefits," the Supervisor said about the multifaceted project, funded by a \$210 million federal grant by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The station will also support additional bus service on the I-10 El Monte Busway to enhance the performance of the I-10 ExpressLanes Project.

The upgrading of the El Monte Bus Station is an essential part of the success of the ExpressLane project in an effort to provide commuters, regardless of income level, with new and better travel options along two of LA County's most congested corridors. ExpressLanes are scheduled to open in 2012.

"Our goal is to move more people, more quickly and create job opportunities for our residents in the process," the Supervisor said.

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